

REMARKS

Status of Claims

Claims 1 and 5-11 are pending. Claims 2-4 have been cancelled. Applicants note with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter of claim 4.

Claim 1 has been amended so as to incorporate all of the limitations of claim 4. Accordingly, claim 4 has been cancelled without prejudice. It is respectfully submitted that because no new matter or consideration are introduced by this amendment, this amendment should be entered.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 5-7 and 9-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Yamamoto et al. (US 6,824,601).

Applicants respectfully submit that since claim 1 has been amended so as to incorporate all of the limitations of allowable claim 4, amended claim 1 is now patentable over Yamamoto. Since claims 5-7 and 9-10 depend upon claim 1, these claims are also allowable. Thus, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claims 1, 5-7 and 9-10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e).

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 8 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamamoto et al. in view of JP 2002-003284.

Applicants respectfully submit that since claim 1 is patentable over Yamamoto and JP 2002-003284 fails to cure the deficiencies of claim 1, claim 1 is patentable over the cited

references. Since claim 8 depends upon claim 1, this claim is also patentable over the cited references. Thus, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

CONCLUSION

As all the claims have clearly been placed into condition for allowance, Applicants respectfully request entry of this amendment. Having fully responded to all matters raised in the Office Action, Applicants respectfully solicit an indication for allowance. If there are any outstanding issues that might be resolved by an interview or an Examiner's amendment, the Examiner is requested to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number shown below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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